



TAKECHARGE

WELCOA'S SELF-CARE BULLETIN

Making Sure You Have Safe Fun in the Sun

Did you know that the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes? Nearly 5 million people are treated for skin cancer each year in the United States. Skin cancer can be serious, expensive, and sometimes even deadly. Fortunately, most skin cancers can be prevented.

You can reduce your and your family's risk of skin damage and skin cancer by following some simple strategies. Here are some ways to protect yourself while out enjoying the sunshine!

SUN SAFETY TIPS

Damage from exposure to UV rays builds up over time, so sun protection should start at an early age. Some ways to stay sun-safe outdoors include **wearing sun protection gear** like a hat with a wide brim and sunglasses to protect your face and eyes, and wearing a long-sleeved shirt and pants or a long skirt for additional protection when possible. **Sunglasses** protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce the risk of cataracts and other eye problems. Wrap-around sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays offer the best protection by blocking UV rays from the side.

Seek shade, especially during midday hours.

This includes 10 am to 4 pm, March through October, and 9 am to 3 pm, November through February. Be extra careful around surfaces that reflect the sun's rays, like snow, sand, water, and concrete. Umbrellas, trees, or other shelters can provide relief from the sun.



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.



Apply a thick layer of broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher

at least 15 minutes before going outside, even on cloudy or overcast days. Most sunscreen products work by absorbing, reflecting, or scattering sunlight. They contain chemicals that interact with the skin to protect it from UV rays. All products do not have the same ingredients; if your skin reacts badly to one product, try another one or call a doctor. Reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours and after swimming, sweating, or toweling off. Don't forget to put a thick layer on all parts of exposed skin. Get help for hard-to-reach places like your back. And remember, sunscreen works best when combined with other options to prevent UV damage.

IS INDOOR TANNING SAFER?

Indoor and outdoor tanning often begin in the teen years and continue into adulthood. Don't wait to teach your children about the dangers of tanning. Children may be more receptive than teens, so start the conversation early, before they start outdoor tanning or indoor tanning.

Indoor tanning:

- » Exposes users to intense levels of UV rays, a known cause of cancer.
- » Does not offer protection against future sunburns. A "base tan" is actually a sign of skin damage.
- » Can spread germs that can cause serious skin infections.
- » Can lead to serious injury. Indoor tanning accidents and burns send more than 3,000 people to the emergency room each year.
- » The U.S. Food and Drug Administration states that indoor tanning should not be used by anyone younger than age 18. Many states restrict the use of indoor tanning by minors.



There's no such thing as a safe tan!